2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

585 quantities of wine and *rakiya,* the hiring of musicians from Sofia, and the baking of many pies and loaves of bread. Of course, the women of the neighborhood shared in the excitement by helping both the parents of the bride and of the groom.

Before the church service all of the young people who could find a wagon went to the bride's house, and after certain formalities took her possessions to the home of the groom. The bony horses raced around the curves in a cloud of dust while the boys cracked whips and shot guns. The procession to the church went first to the home of the godparents, a point of special honor, then to the home of the groom, and finally to that of the bride. As in America, there was room for great variety in wedding procedures, according to the amount of money the families could afford to spend.

● 431 584 Another important aspect of a village wedding was the custom of presenting important guests with some sort of garment. The groom's family gave a shirt, a belt, or a handkerchief to each of its close relatives, but the bride had to have something ready for the relatives of both families. When she was eight or nine years old she began preparing these numerous presents, doing them all by hand. In return she received a small sum of money from each person she honored. [574] At the first weddings I attended I failed, through ignorance of the custom, to live up to my part of the bargain, but that seemed to make no difference in the way the people felt toward me. They never came to remind me of the oversight, because with natural courtesy they did not want to make me, a guest, feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. One evening when I was visiting one of the families I knew best, I asked a twenty-year-old girl to show me her hope chest containing the presents that she intended to give away as well as those garments that she planned to keep for her own use. This is what the chest contained:

25 pairs of socks knitted by the girl
55 long white shirts of homespun cloth (half to be given away)
35 homespun belts to be given to unmarried men
15 face towels
15 headkerchiefs worn by married women
20 *sukmani,* or black jumper dresses (most to be kept by the girl)

This girl was by no means from a rich house hold.